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SUBJECT: SOUTH AFRICA POLITICAL NEWSLETTER FEBRUARY 1-FEBRUARY 5

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1. (SBU) This was written in partnership with the Open Source Center's Pretoria Bureau. The newsletter is open to contributions from officers in the Embassy or in the Consulates who wish to highlight political trends. Contact Madeline Seidenstricker or Jonathan Smallridge for more information, or to make contributions. The newsletter also is available on the Political Section's blog, "A View from South Africa," found on intelink.gov.

Domestic News

South Africa's Crime Rates Reportedly Discourage Fans From Purchasing World Cup Tickets

2. (SBU) Al Jazeera English reports that, while South Africa will host the Football World Cup in less than six months, foreign fans are being discouraged from purchasing tickets reportedly because of high crime rates. Fewer than half the numbers of foreign fans are coming - 450,000 - much fewer than the one million estimated back in 2002 and FIFA officials want South African President Jacob Zuma to intervene. The report noted that officials are spending approximately 200 million US dollars on security during the World Cup, hoping to allay security fears, and an additional 40,000 police will be deployed to maintain law and order. According to police statistics, South Africa has one of the highest crime rates in the world, with 50 murders a day. [Description of source: Doha Al Jazeera English TV in English -- international English-language news service of Al-Jazeera, independent television station financed by the Qatari Government]

Broad Range of Commentary on Arrest of Security Minister's Wife

3. (SBU) Pretoria News reported that the January 29 arrest of State Security Minister Siyabonga Cwele's wife on drug-trafficking charges has raised many questions. Opposition Democratic Alliance (DA) MP Theo Coetzee questioned whether the country's security was the minister's number one priority, stating that he should have known about his wife's alleged activities. Commenting on the incident, the Presidency asserted that the arrest of a cabinet minister's wife for alleged drug trafficking did not affect the governing African National Congress (ANC) party at all. Coetzee said the minister will be called to appear before the intelligence committee "to demonstrate that he has not been compromised by the matter - failing which, he should resign." [Description of source: Pretoria Pretoria News Online in English -- Website of local daily, privately owned by Independent Newspaper Company; URL: <http://www.pretorianews.co.za/>]

RSA: Mining Minister Says Nationalization "Not Government Policy"

4. (SBU) The Sowetan reports that Minister of Mining Susan Shabangu

stated on February 4 that there would be no change to the country's minerals laws in response to a question on the ANC Youth League's call for the nationalization of the country's mines. Shabangu asserted that although South Africa was a democracy and people were free to debate issues of political importance, these debates "did not inform government policy." South African President Jacob Zuma and Deputy President Kgalema Motlanthe have said that there will be no change to the country's policy and that nationalization is not yet on the cards. [Description of source: Johannesburg Sowetan Online in English -- privately-owned weekday regional newspaper targeting a mainstream black audience and supportive of government policies; Internet: <http://www.sowetan.co.za>]

Department of Justice Gears up for 2010
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15. (SBU) Some South African courts will extend their hours of operation hours during the FIFA World Cup to avoid possible backlogs of justice, the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development said on February 5. Each court will be allocated two magistrates, two prosecutors and clerks, with the first team working from 8.30 am to 4.30 pm and the second one working from 4.30 pm to 11.30 pm. A total of 1,140 court officials, 35 paralegals, and 93 foreign language interpreters will be deployed to all earmarked courts. Department of Justice spokesperson Tlali Tlali said the beefed up courts would ensure that existing court rolls are not overburdened with cases related to the tournament. Tlali reported there will be 54 dedicated courts, 34 district and 20 regional courts, across all nine provinces. He added there would not be any mobile courts set up at the stadiums as existing physical infrastructure will be used instead. (Buanews, February, 4, 2010)

Investigation Unit Uncovers Corruption in Mpumalanga's Department of Agriculture

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16. (SBU) Senior officials in Mpumalanga's Department of Agriculture have squandered thousands of dollars earmarked to assist emerging farmers and boost food production in the province. Five senior managers from the department of agriculture have been implicated in a multi-million dollar fraud claim. Investigation by the Forensic and Investigative Accounting Unit revealed that top officials paid the corporation and some service providers without following standard procedures; it is believed the officials connived with service providers to make payments for work not done. The probe by the investigation unit was commissioned by Premier David Mabuza to look into the affairs of the Mpumalanga Agricultural Development Corporation, a parastatal attached to the department of agriculture. (Sowetan, February, 4, 2010)

ANC Women's League Defend Inkatha Freedom Party Chairperson

17. (SBU) The ANC Women's League (ANCWL) in KwaZulu-Natal has condemned the redeployment of Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) national chairperson Zanele Magwaza-Msibi from mayor of Zululand district municipality to the provincial legislature. After weeks of denying the claim, the IFP confirmed on Sunday that Magwaza-Msibi would be redeployed. The ANCWL provincial chairperson Lungi Gcabashe called for "all forces in the IFP who believe in a truly equal society to jump ship". She told IFP supporters "there is only one conclusion to be drawn from the IFP's decision to redeploy its chairperson and that is there is no place for women in the IFP," Gcabashe said. Gcabashe said the decision gives credence to the long-held suspicion that there is a ceiling for women among IFP ranks. (Sowetan, February 5, 2010)

President Takes Time Off

18. (SBU) The presidency has issued a statement noting President Jacob Zuma would be taking February 4-5 off to "rest following a hectic schedule." The announcement came after the president returned from the African Union summit and confirmation on February

3 that he has in fact fathered a child (reportedly his 20th) with soccer boss Irvin Khoza's daughter, Sonono Khoza. (Eyewitness, February, 4, 2010)

International News

Desmond Tutu Calls For Iranians to Release American Hikers

[19](#). (SBU) Nobel Laureate Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu on February 2 called on Iranian authorities to release three American hikers, who have been held for six months for straying into Iran while hiking along the Iraqi-Iranian border. Tutu said it was difficult to escape the conclusion that they were being held because they were Americans and not for any legal reason. (SAPA, February 2)

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